REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request that the above-identified application be reexamined.

The November 9, 2006, Office Action ("Office Action") rejected all of the claims in this application. More specifically, Claims 1-8 and 15-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,808,610, issued to Benson et al. ("Benson et al."). Claims 9-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Patent No. 5,808,610 ("Benson et al."), in view of Patent No. 6,480,813 B1, issued to Bloomquist et al. ("Bloomquist et al."). Claims 13 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Benson et al., in view of Bloomquist et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,920,315, issued to Santos-Gomez ("Santos-Gomez"). In addition, Claims 16 and 17 were objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75(c) as being in improper form. Since the bases of the objections have been corrected, they will not be further discussed.

While applicants respectfully disagree with the rejection of Claims 1-8 and 15-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and Claims 9-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), in order to advance the prosecution of this application, various minor clarifying amendments have been made to the language of the claims. Applicants respectfully submit that all the claims in this application are clearly allowable in view of the teachings of the cited and applied references.

Prior to discussing in detail why applicants believe that all the claims in this application are allowable, a brief description of the disclosed subject matter and brief descriptions of the teachings of the cited and applied references are provided. The following discussions of the disclosed subject matter and the cited and applied references are not provided to define the scope or interpretation of any of the claims of this application. Instead, these discussions are provided to help the United States Patent and Trademark Office better appreciate important claim distinctions discussed thereafter.

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS PLLC
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

Disclosed Subject Matter

A method, user interface, system, and computer-readable medium for positioning graphical components in computer displays are disclosed. The method comprises positioning graphical components by snapping a first graphical component into a location relative to a second graphical component. The first component's relative position is automatically determined using collinear lines. The collinear lines are determined by the edges of the second graphical component. The first and second components may or may not be rectilinear. When an edge of the first graphical component moves within a predetermined distance of one of the collinear lines, the first graphical component's edge snaps to the collinear line.

Snapping the first graphical component's edge to the collinear line is accomplished by either repositioning the first graphical component or extending the first graphical component to cause the first graphical component to meet the line.

The predetermined distance from a collinear line is either uniform across all collinear lines or is gradated. Gradated distance is useful when the predetermined distance varies over the distance from the component where the lines originate, varies across display regions, or varies based on predefined relationships between graphical components.

U.S. Patent No. 5,808,610 (Benson et al.)

Benson et al. is directed to a computer program for displaying a plurality of panels on a computer system's display. The panels can be docked by dragging a first panel to within a certain proximity of a second panel while holding down a modifier key. *When the panels are docked, a docking wedge is created between the panels.* Docked panels can be open, closed, or moved as a single unit, i.e., a single panel. The single panel formed from docked panels can be reduced in size by pressing a minimize button on any one of the docked panels.

The Office Action remarks equate the docking wedge method of Benson et al. to the collinear line method. Applicants strongly disagree. A docking wedge is used to connect panels together to form a unit. Hence, a docking wedge touches the two panels adjacent to the docking

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS PLLC
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

wedge. While the docked edges may be parallel, they are not collinear.[1] While docking wedges connect panels, they do not align panels in one specific way. In contrast, collinear lines are used to align graphical components, which may or may not touch and are not connected into one unit.

U.S. Patent No. 6,480,813 (Bloomquist et al.)

Bloomquist et al. is directed to a method, apparatus, and article of manufacture for defining a precision drawing point. The method defines temporary interesting points anywhere in the drawing space. Each temporary interesting point allows the definition of a set of candidate alignment lines, all intersecting at the temporary interesting point. *When a user moves the cursor within a snap distance of one of the set of candidate alignment lines, an alignment line is displayed. The precision drawing point is then defined on the alignment line.* Bloomquist et al. is not directed to a method of positioning a graphical component in a display and uses alignment lines that are not collinear lines.

U.S. Patent No. 5,920,315 (Santos-Gomez)

Santos-Gomez is directed to a computer program for providing a user interface that includes a window having a workspace and a set of non-overlapping resizable panes comprising a plurality of non-overlapping resizable panes within the workspace. The non-overlapping resizable panes occupy substantially the entirety of the workspace. Santos-Gomez is not directed to a method of positioning a graphical component in a display.

Rejection of Claims 1-8 and 15-20 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) Based on Benson et al.

As amended, independent Claim 1 reads as follows:

> 1. A computer implemented method of positioning a graphical component in a display, the method comprising:
>
> determining collinear lines for a first graphical component, the collinear lines formed by extending the edges of the first graphical component;

---

[1] Collinear is defined as lying on the same straight line, passing through the same straight line or containing a common line; coaxial. See attached pages 1-4 from the dictionary.com Web site.

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS PLLC
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

detecting the movement of an edge of a second graphical component;

determining when said edge of the second graphical component is moved within a predetermined distance of one of said collinear lines of said first graphical component; and

automatically aligning said edge of said second graphical component with said one of said collinear lines of said first graphical component.

Remarks accompanying the rejection of Claim 1 in the Office Action read as follows:

As per independent claim 1, Benson teaches a computer implemented method of positioning a graphical component in a display, the method comprising:

determining collinear lines for a first graphical component (fig. 5, docking wedge 512);

detecting the movement of an edge of a second graphical component (Col. 1, lines 64-65);

determining when said edge of the second graphical component is moved within a dynamically predetermined distance of one of said collinear lines of said first graphical component (Col. 3, line 66 - Col. 4, line 8); and

automatically aligning said edge of said second graphical component with said one of said collinear lines of said first graphical component (Col. 3, line 66 - Col. 4, line 8).

Independent Claims 16, 17, and 18 are individually similar in scope to independent claim 1 and therefore are rejected under similar rationale.

Applicants respectfully disagree. In Benson et al., Figure 5, it can be seen that only the top edges of the panels 210 and 214 are aligned.[2] The right edge of panel 214 touches the left edge of docking wedge 512 and the left edge of panel 210 touches the right edge of docking

[2] Why or how the top edges are aligned is not described in Benson et al. Presumably, this alignment is accomplished by eyesight, not by software.

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS PLLC
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

wedge 512. The docking wedge prevents the right edge of panel 214 from becoming collinear with the left edge of panel 210.

Col. 1, lines 64-65, of Benson et al. state:

> A user can dock a panel to another by dragging the first panel in proximity to the second panel while holding down a modifier key.

Col. 3, line 66, of Benson et al. states:

> To dock two or more panels, the user drags a first panel . . . .

Col. 4, lines 5-8, of Benson et al. states:

> Preferably, the user must drop the first panel within 12 pixels of the second panels to dock. In such a case, the first panel will "snap" to the side of the docking wedge . . . .

Applicants respectfully disagree that docking a first panel to a second panel by dragging the first panel to within 12 pixels of the second panel is the same as snapping a first graphical component to a second graphical component by determining when an edge of the second graphical component is moved within a predetermined distance of one of the collinear lines of the first graphical component, the collinear line determined by the edges of the first graphical component. Benson et al. does not teach or suggest the use of collinear lines. "Collinear" has a specific meaning. See footnote 1 above. Joining panels by docking wedges requires panel spacing, not collinearity.

For the same reasons stated above, applicants further respectfully disagree that a reading of Col. 3, line 66, and Col. 4, line 8, of Benson et al. even remotely suggests or implies that docking two or more panels using a docking wedge is the same as automatically aligning an edge of a graphical component with a collinear line of another graphical component as required by Claim 1. Alignment employing collinear lines is not the same as docking employing docking wedges. As a result, applicants respectfully submit that Claim 1 and all of the claims directly or indirectly depending on Claim 1 rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) based on the teachings of Benson et al. (Claims 2-8, 15-17) are clearly allowable over Benson et al.

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS PLLC
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

Claim 18, as amended, reads as follows:

> A graphical user interface of a computer with relative snapping positioning of windows, the graphical user interface comprising:
>
> a first window in a computer display;
>
> a second window in said computer display;
>
> automatically determined lines collinear to the edges of said second window; and
>
> automatically moving an edge of said first window to one of said automatically determined lines collinear to the edges of said second window when said edge of said first window is within a predetermined distance of said one of said automatically determined lines.

Since Claim 18 includes collinear recitations somewhat similar to the collinear recitations of Claim 1 described above, Claim 18 is also submitted to be clearly allowable in view of Benson et al., as are dependent Claims 19 and 20.

Applicants further submit that Claims 2-8 and 15, which are dependent from Claim 1, and Claims 19-20, which are dependent from Claim 18, include limitations that are also not taught or remotely suggested by Benson et al., particularly when considered in combination with the claims from which these claims depend. Thus, applicants submit that these claims are allowable for additional reasons. For example, Claim 2, which is dependent from Claim 1, recites that the first graphical component is a polygonal component. While panel 214, shown in Figure 3 of Benson et al., is a rectangle and hence a polygonal component, Benson et al. does not describe or illustrate how a docking wedge can be applied to polygonal components other than rectangles, such as triangles, quadrilaterals, pentagons, etc., recited in Claim 3.

The remarks concerning the rejection of Claim 5, which is dependent from Claim 1, state that Benson et al. at Col. 2, lines 5-9, teaches a second graphical component is resized. Benson et al. at Col. 2, lines 5-9 read as follows:

> Docked panels may be opened, closed, or moved as a single unit. In addition, resizable panels can still be resized while docked. When a docked panel is resized, the configuration of the docked panels

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS PLLC
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

automatically changes as necessary to prevent the docked panels from overlapping.

As amended, Claim 5 reads as follows:

> The method of Claim 1, wherein said second graphical component is resized to automatically align said edge of said second graphical component with said one of said collinear lines of said first graphical component.

It is clear that Benson et al., Col. 2, lines 5-9, teaches resizing only docked panels as a single unit or individually for the sole purpose of resizing one or more panels and not for alignment, automatic or otherwise. In contrast, Claim 5 recites resizing a graphical component in order to automatically align the edge of the graphical component with a collinear line of another graphical component. Claim 20, which depends from Claim 18, includes a somewhat similar recitation, albeit different in scope.

The remarks concerning the rejection of Claim 6, which is dependent from Claim 5, also cite Benson et al., Col. 2, lines 5-9, to support the conclusion that Benson et al. teaches receiving an indication to resize a first display component until an edge of the first display component is within a predetermined distance of a collinear line of a second display component. Since Benson et al. relies on docking wedges and not collinear lines, it is not possible to resize a first display component until an edge of the first display component is within a predetermined distance of a collinear line of a second display component using the docking wedge method of Benson et al.

Rejection of Claims 9-12 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Based on Benson et al. in View of Bloomquist et al.

Remarks accompanying the rejection of Claim 9 in the Office Action read as follows:

> As per claim 9, Benson teaches the method of Claim 8. However, Benson does not teach expressly the method wherein said gradated predetermined distance varies according to the proximity of said first graphical component to said second graphical component.
>
> Bloomquist teaches a method wherein a gradated predetermined distance varies according to proximity of said first graphical component to said second graphical component (Figure 8 and Col. 6, lines 6-14).

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS PLLC
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

> Benson and Bloomquist are analogous art because they are in the same field of endeavor, namely, graphical user interfaces with snapping functions.
>
> At the time of the invention it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to provide the snapping functionality of Bloomquist with Benson's method, in order to provide a more precise snapping function.

Applicants respectfully disagree that Bloomquist et al. teaches a method wherein a gradated predetermined distance varies according to proximity of said first graphical component to said second graphical component. Bloomquist et al., Col. 6, lines 6-14, reads as follows:

> FIG. 8 shows an alternative embodiment of the present invention in which the snap distance to each line D 308A and D2 708A can vary with the distance from the temporary points. This implementation is useful in situations where the temporary points positioned at 302 and 702 are close together (for example, at a distance less than the snap distances D 308A and D2 708A), because it prevents the display of a multiplicity of alignment lines. If necessary, logic can be implemented to determine the separation of the temporary points.

Applicants also disagree that it would be obvious to one skilled in the art to combine the teachings of Bloomquist et al. with Benson et al. More importantly, even if the teachings of these references were combinable, which applicants deny, the resulting combination would not meet the recitation of Claim 9 combined with Claim 1, since Bloomquist et al. does not teach the deficiencies of Benson et al. discussed above. Thus, applicants submit that Claim 9 is also allowable. Since Claims 10 and 11 depend from Claim 9, Claims 10 and 11 are also submitted to be clearly allowable over Benson et al. in view of Bloomquist et al.

Claim 12 depends from Claim 1 and recites that "said predetermined distance varies according to a predefined relationship between said first graphical component and said second graphical component." Applicants submit that this subject matter is not taught or suggested by Figure 8 or in Col. 6, lines 6-14, as stated in the Office Action. Applicants further submit that even if taught or suggested, there is no basis for the Office Action's conclusion that it would be obvious to combine the teachings of Bloomquist et al. with the teachings of Benson et al. More

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS PLLC
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

importantly, even if combinable, which applicants deny, the resulting combination would not meet the combined recitation of Claims 1 and 12 since Bloomquist et al. does not make up for the deficiency of the teachings of Benson et al. discussed above. Thus, Claim 12 is also submitted to be allowable in view of the teaching of Benson et al. and Bloomquist et al.

Rejection of Claims 13 and 14 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Based on Benson et al. in View of Bloomquist et al. and Santos-Gomez

Remarks accompanying the rejection of Claim 13 in the Office Action state:

> Santos-Gomez teaches a method wherein predetermined relationship is determined from the type of graphical components forming said first and second graphical components (column 4, lines 15-27)

Remarks accompanying the rejection of Claim 14 in the Office Action state:

> As per claim 14, the modified Benson, in view of Bloomquist and Santos-Gomez, teaches the method of claim 12, wherein said predetermined relationship is determined from the contents of said first and said second graphical components (Santos-Gomez column 4, lines 15-27).

Santos-Gomez, Col. 4, lines 15-27, reads as follows:

> By replacing the contents of a pane with the contents associated with the selected icon, the proliferation of windows may be reduced. A user will not be presented with an ever increasing number of windows of old and less relevant information but will have the most relevant information displayed most prominently in the workspace. Furthermore, with the inclusion of a view stack the user may readily move between contents of a pane to access the underlying information. These aspects of the present invention may substantially reduce window proliferation and allow a user to focus on the most relevant information without rearranging a desktop and without having to close out of date windows.

It is clear that Santos-Gomez teaches replacing the contents of a pane with the contents associated with an icon and the use of a view stack, i.e., a stack of panes. Santos-Gomez does not teach or even remotely suggest or imply a predetermined relationship between two graphical components. Santos-Gomez also does not teach or disclose the deficiencies of Benson et al.

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS PLLC
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

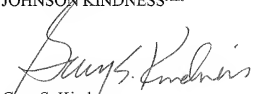
described above. As a result, applicants further submit that Claims 13 and 14 are clearly allowable in view of the teachings of Benson et al., Bloomquist et al., and Santos-Gomez.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing comments, applicants respectfully submit that all claims in this application are allowable. Consequently, early and favorable action passing this application to issue is respectfully solicited. If the Examiner has any further questions, the Examiner is invited to contact applicants' attorney at the number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR
JOHNSON KINDNESS PLLC



Gary S. Kindness
Registration No. 22,178
Direct Dial No. 206.695.1702

GSK/MFM:aew

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS PLLC
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

Top Web Results for "Collinear"

4 results for: *Collinear*

View results from: Dictionary | Thesaurus | Encyclopedia | All Reference | the Web

Dictionary.com Unabridged (v 1.1) – Cite This Source

col·lin·e·ar [**kuh**-**lin**-ee-er, koh-] Pronunciation Key - Show IPA Pronunciation

-adjective

lying in the same straight line.

[Origin: 1720–30; COL-[1] + LINEAR]

Related forms

col·lin·e·ar·i·ty, *noun*
col·lin·e·ar·ly, *adverb*

American Heritage Dictionary – Cite This Source

col·lin·e·ar (kə-lĭn'ē-ər, kŏ-) Pronunciation Key

adj.

1. Passing through or lying on the same straight line.
2. Containing a common line; coaxial.

col·lin'e·ar'i·ty (-ār'ĭ-tē) *n.*

WordNet – Cite This Source

collinear

adjective

lying on the same line

The American Heritage Science Dictionary – Cite This Source

collinear (kə-lĭn'ē-ər) Pronunciation Key

1. Sharing a common line, such as two intersecting planes.
2. Lying on the same line, such as a set of points.